July/August1992 Volume 17, Number 4

A summary of recent news stories from the University of California, San Francisco

UCSF

News for You

New Attack on Breast Cancer Formed

UCSF is part of a Bay Area consortium which is enrolling at least 150 patients for a trial to test whether the drug tamoxifen is effective in preventing breast cancer in women at high risk.

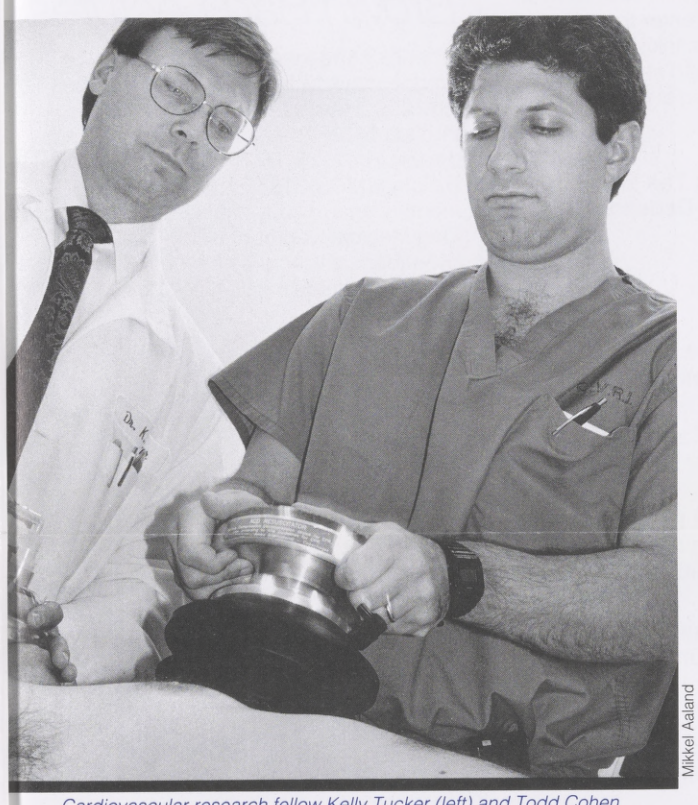
The trial is part of the first large-scale national prevention study by the National Institutes of Health, which will recruit 16,000 women at 270 sites across the U.S. and Canada. Joining UCSF in the Bay Area consortium are the California Healthcare Systems Community Clinical Oncology Program and the Bay Area Tumor Institute.

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in women in the U.S. and Canada and is the second leading cause of cancer death, surpassed only by lung cancer. One out of nine women in this country will develop breast cancer in her lifetime, according to current American Cancer Society estimates.

UCSF's Judith Luce, an oncologist at SFGH, is principal investigator of the Bay Area trial. Co-principal investigator is Ernest Rosenbaum, clinical professor of medicine at Mount Zion.

Women will be enrolled in the Bay Area arm of the trial over the next two years. To participate, you must be over 60 years old, or over 35 years old and have risk factors which include: a family history of breast cancer, particularly in mother, sister(s) daughter(s); never having borne a child; having first child past age 30; starting menstrual periods at an early age.

For further information, you or your physician should call 1-800-283-9765.



Mikkel Aaland

Cardiovascular research fellow Kelly Tucker (left) and Todd Cohen demonstrate the ACD Resuscitator.

The First Practical Advance in CPR?

Inspired by a man's impulsive decision to resuscitate a heart attack victim by pumping on his chest with a toilet plunger, UCSF researchers led by Todd J. Cohen have developed a suction device that potentially could become the first practical improvement in CPR since the technique was developed in 1960.

Known as the Active Compression-Decompression (ACD) Resuscitator, the device includes a large rubber suction cup attached to a horizontal handle. After placing the suction device on a heart attack victim's bare chest, the user grips the handle with both hands and pushes and pulls on the device in the same rhythm as conventional CPR. The UCSF study proved that the ACD pumped more blood through the heart and drew more air into the lungs of heart attack victims than standard CPR.

Researchers, led by Cohen, began investigating the technique after a heart attack patient who had been revived through CPR performed with a bathroom plunger arrived at SFGH.

Student Winners in SEP Contest

A team of Abraham Lincoln High School students who explained the facts about AIDS to middle school students and two Hoover Middle School eighth-graders who taught fifth-graders how to protect animals have won first prize in the fifth annual UCSF-sponsored Science & Health Lesson Plan Contest. First prize winners received $1,000 each, to be shared with their teachers and schools.

Sixteen teams of middle and high school students were awarded a total of $5,000 for the contest, sponsored by UCSF's Science & Health Education Partnership Program (SEP) in cooperation with the S.F. Unified School District.

Some 200 middle and high school students entered the contest, designed to get students working in teams to experience the fun of science and to examine a subject in depth by developing lessons for their classmates or younger students. Thirty-nine teams were chosen as finalists, and they became teachers for a day. Judges were from UCSF and the School District.

David Powers

At Presidio Middle School: third-place winner Tanner Shea, an eighth-grader, describes his project "Local Motion" to sixth-graders.

In Brief

New Liver Transplant Procedure

A pioneering liver transplant procedure which uses a portion of a living donor's liver to replace the recipient's diseased organ soon will be offered at UCSF thanks to the appointment of Jean C. Emond to the UCSF Liver Transplant Service. Emond helped develop living-donor liver transplants at the University of Chicago. Only two other institutions in the world — in Japan and Germany — offer the new procedure.

The big advantage of taking a portion of a liver from a living donor is that the liver will regenerate after it is transplanted. Emond expects donation by family members to become the source of organs for a significant number of liver transplant patients in the future, eliminating the need to wait for an organ from someone who has died. Currently up to 20% of patients on waiting lists for new livers die before an organ becomes available.

Emond estimates that fewer than 100 living-donor liver transplants have been performed worldwide since the procedure was introduced in 1989. All of the recipients to date have been children, for whom it is particularly difficult to find cadaver donor organs which are small enough for transplantation. Emond plans to continue his work with children as well as perform the first adult living-donor liver transplant at UCSF.

Infertility Program Expands

The In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Program at UCSF now is operating an expanded service in newly renovated quarters. According to program medical director Mary Martin, the expansion means that UCSF can offer the newest technologies available to couples who are trying to conceive. The IVF patient treatment rooms and laboratory facilities — which previously were spread out on different floors — now are located together on the plaza level of the Ambulatory Care Center, 400 Parnassus Avenue. For further information call 476-2224.

Laurel Heights Setback

In May, UCSF was dealt another blow regarding Laurel Heights. In a split decision, the California Court of Appeals ruled that the latest Laurel Heights Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be "recirculated" to neighbors and planners for additional review. While the court acknowledged that the legal standard for recirculation is not "clearly defined," UCSF now must decide if and when it should recirculate the EIR and hold additional public hearings to solicit more comments.

The decision handed down by the two-member majority of the First District Court of Appeals in San Francisco upheld a challenge to the EIR filed by the Laurel Heights Improvement Association, which has been opposing UCSF's plan for nearly six years. The court ruled only on the narrow procedural question of whether the final EIR was required to be recirculated, not on the adequacy of the EIR.

"At the Heart of It"

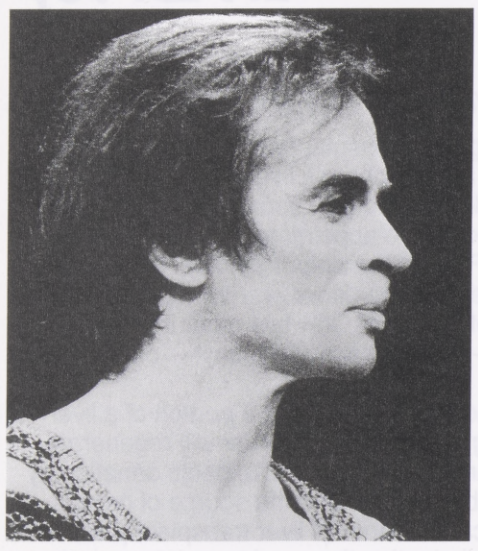
Would you be interested in joining a new cardiac support group? Called "At the Heart of It," it is sponsored by UCSF/Mount Zion, and is for people who face the problems and fears surrounding heart disease. For further information, call 885-7227.

More News for You
on the back page

What's happening

July/August 992
A bimonthly calenda
events at UCSan Fr

Special Events



Fri., July 17

Nureyev Conducts UCSF Orchestra. Rudolf Nureyev conducts Beethoven's Symphony 3 in E flat major ("Eroica") & selections from Prokofiev's "Romeo & Juliet." Benefits UCSF Dept. of Urology & the orchestra. $25/35/50 & $250 for gala & performance. Masonic Aud., 1111 California. 8 p.m. Call 433-9500 or 762-BASS for tickets, 476-2542 for information.

Fog Fun Concerts. Arts & Performances presents its annual July concert series, held Wednesdays at noon in the Plaza Grill, 500 Parnassus. Beat the fog and bring out the sunshine with jazz, country, reggae and a little bit of Broadway.

Family Film Festival. All films rated G or PG. Children under 14 $2; UCSF students & Millberry members $2.50; seniors & other students $3; general $3.50. Grandparents go free when accompanied by grandchildren. Movies subject to change. Call 476-6761 for special rates & reservations for groups of 10 or more (10:30 a.m. shows only).

July 9 at 5:30 & 7:30 p.m.
July 10 at 10:30 a.m., 6 & 8 p.m.
101 Dalmatians.

July 16 at 5:30 & 7:30 p.m.
July 17 at 10:30 a.m., 6 & 8 p.m.
Beauty & the Beast.

July 23 at 5:30 & 7:30 p.m.
July 24 at 10:30 a.m., 6 & 8 p.m.
American Tale: Fievel Goes West.

July 30 at 5:30 & 7:30 p.m.
July 31 at 10:30 a.m., 6 & 8 p.m.
All Dogs Go to Heaven.

Aug. 6 at 5:30 & 7:45 p.m.
Aug. 7 at 6 & 8:15 p.m.
Beethoven.

Aug. 13 at 5:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Aug. 14 at 6 & 8 p.m.
Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest.

AIDS Programs

Sponsored by UCSF AIDS Health Project. For more information call 476-3902.

Living with HIV Public Forums. Call for schedule.

Individual Risk Assessments & Referrals. By appointment. Free.

Positives Being Positive. Anonymous support groups in the community for people who have tested HIV positive but have not developed symptoms of AIDS.

Other Support Groups. Drop-in & eight-week facilitated groups for men & women with AIDS or HIV infection, in a risk group or otherwise affected.

Campus Tours

All tours are free and take place at 1 p.m. on Tuesdays, July 7, 14, 21, 28 and August 4, 11, 18, 25. Those interested may meet in the lobby of Medical Sciences, 513 Parnassus. For further tour information call 476-4394.

Women's Programs

Events are sponsored by UCSF Women's Resource Center. For more information call 476-0400. To pre-register for workshops call 476-5836.

Tues., July 7
Mothers of East Los Angeles: Para Ellas Luchamos. How MELA is active in East L.A. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Sat., July 11
Basic Home Repair Workshop: Plumbing. Rm. 517, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. $35-$55. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sat., July 18
Basic Home Repair Workshop: Electrical. Rm. 517, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. $35-$55. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Thurs., July 23
Talking Back to Sexual Pressure. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1:30 p.m.

Tues., Aug. 11
Video Presentation: Wild Women Don't Have the Blues. A look at African American life early in this century & how it gave birth to the blues. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

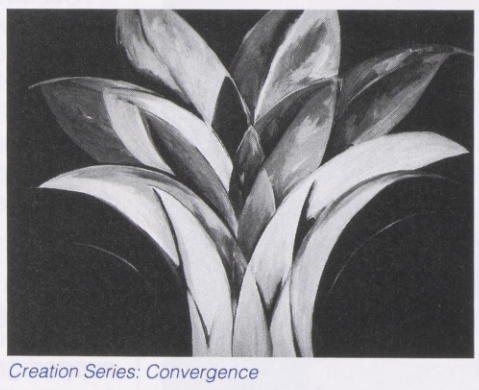
Breast Cancer Screening

Women can have low-cost mammograms — X-rays to screen for breast cancer — from a mobile van that travels to convenient Bay Area locations. The procedure takes approximately 20 minutes and costs $60. Your physician's approval is required, plus his/her full name, address & telephone number to assure results are mailed promptly. Appointments must be made at least one month to six weeks in advance. Find out when the van will be in your neighborhood by calling 476-2193 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. A $50 mammography screening also is available at the Mount Zion Medical Center of UCSF Radiology Department. Call 885-7710.

Outdoors Unlimited

Outdoors Unlimited, a cooperative resource center for outdoor recreation and adventure serving both the UCSF campus and the general public, celebrates its 20th anniversary on Sat. & Sun., Aug. 1 & 2. The celebration is open to all. OU provides skills training, equipment rentals, trip planning information and a place to meet others with similar interests. To receive a quarterly listing of trips and clinics, call 476-2078.

Art Exhibits



Creation Series: Convergence

Paintings by Verity Dierauf. On display at the Faculty/Alumni House, 745 Parnassus. Through Fri., Aug. 28. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Call 476-4723.

Hospitals Auxiliary Art Exhibit. On display during July in the lobby of Moffitt/Long Hospitals, 505 Parnassus, will be watercolors, black & white photos & etchings. The August display will feature wildlife prints. A portion of all proceeds benefits patients at the Medical Center at UCSF. To purchase or reserve work, visit the Auxiliary Office, Rm. 182, Moffitt Hospital, 505 Parnassus, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., or call 476-4906.

Blood Donation

Tues., July 28
Summer Blood Drive. Blood may be given in the Irwin Memorial Blood Bank Centers' Donor Mobile outside Millberry Union, 500 Parnassus. 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

You don't have to wait for a blood drive to give blood. You may donate any weekday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., or Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at UCSF's Blood Donor Center, Rm. 131 Long Hospital, 505 Parnassus. For information & appointments call 476-6989.

Institute of Healing Arts & Sciences

All talks are free and held on Fridays at noon in Rm. 721, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. Workshops take place in Rm. 517, Nursing Bldg. Call Terry Olesen at 759-9929 for details & to register for workshops.

July 10
Psychic Co-Dependency: The Energetic Consequences of the Co-Dependent Relationship.

July 17
Anatomy of Movement.

July 24
Psycho-Spiritual Medicine: A Bridge Between Physicians & Healers.

July 31
Goodbye to Mr. Normal. Say goodbye to fitting in & learn to trust your inner resources.

Aug. 7
Past Life Therapy & Spirit Releasement Therapy. Workshop follows later that evening, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Call for price.

Aug. 14
A Body Integration System. Understand body organization & communication.

Aug. 21
From Cancer to Life.

Aug. 28
Attracting & Understanding Your Soul Mates.

Baptiste Method Yoga Class for Mind/Body/Spirit. Offered Mondays & Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. in Rm. 317, Health Sciences East, enter through 513 Parnassus. Saturday morning classes also available. First class free. For prices & pre-registration call 387-6833.

Transcendental Meditation & Higher States of Consciousness. Lecture & video presentation first Monday of each month. Rm. 517, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. 7 p.m. Call (510) 548-1144.

Multiple Helpers Outreach Network Support Group. For victims & survivors of violent trauma. Ages 15 & over. Meets on Tuesdays from 10 a.m.-noon and on Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m. in Rm. A222, Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute, 401 Parnassus; and from 7-10 p.m. in Rm. 517, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. For further information call the helpline at 759-7923, 7 a.m.-10 p.m. daily.

Senior Health Education Program

Free lectures by UCSF staff geared to senior centers. Call 476-4394 for information.

Brain Tumor Support Group

The UCSF Department of Neurological Surgery and the National Brain Tumor Foundation co-sponsor this group which provides information, education, psychological support and advocacy for brain tumor patients and their families. Meets on the first Tuesday of each month in Rm. 758, Medical Sciences Bldg., 513 Parnassus, at 7:30 p.m. Call 296-0404.

Great Expectations Programs for Parents

The UCSF Birth Center offers the following video presentations on Wednesdays. Rm. 326, Ambulatory Care Center, 400 Parnassus. 7-8:30 p.m. Call 476-MOMS for registration & information. Also call for details about San Francisco Mothers of Twins Club.

July 15
Childbirth Choices: Options for Labor & Birth. Video presentation of "The Birth Place."

Aug. 19
Labor Support & Medication During Childbirth. Video presentation of "Birth Plans & Realities."

Brown Bag Lectures

A series of free lectures held weekly on Wednesdays at the Parnassus campus (P), Rm. 300, Health Sciences West, enter through 513 Parnassus; monthly on Thursdays in Rm. 125, UCSF-Mission Center Building (MCB), 1855 Folsom St.; and monthly on Tuesdays in Herbst Hall, Mount Zion Medical Center of UCSF (MZ), 1600 Divisadero. All lectures held at noon. For further information call 476-4394.

July 1
Art & Physics. (P)

July 8
Wine & Health. (P)

ArtMaster

July 15
Shoot Out at the Wall Street Corral. A humorous & magical look at Wall Street. (P)

July 16
How to Work with Difficult People. (MCB)

July 21
Understanding the Human Brain. (MZ)

July 22
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. (P)

July 29
Managing Change Successfully. (P)

Aug. 5
Help! My Hearing Aid Lives in My Drawer. (P)

Aug. 12
The Great American Medical Show. An illustrated social history of alternative healers & health hucksters. (P)

Aug. 18
Family Cancer Risk Reduction Program for Breast Cancer. (MZ)

Aug. 19
Once Upon a Midlife. Tales about midlife from around the world. (P)

Aug. 20
Weight Loss is Not a Cure for Obesity. (MCB)

Aug. 26
Why Pains Don't Fade. Physical & mental processes leading to continued pain. (P)

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Recreation & Fitness

Do something fun with your free time this summer! At Millberry Fitness Center you can choose from a wide variety of classes & workshops including aerobics, dance, tennis & much more. Call 476-1115 for more information & a free brochure.

Personal Safety

Tear Gas Certification Classes. Call Chris Yee at 476-5683 for information & schedule.

Survivors Support Group. Looking at how sexual assault can affect day-to-day life. Sponsored by Rape Prevention Education Program. Twelve consecutive sessions. $5-$25. Call 476-5222 for class dates, time, location and registration.

The following presentations are available by appointment to groups in the community or at your workplace:

Crime Prevention. Presented by UCSF Police Department. Call 476-5683.

Personal Safety. Presented by UCSF Rape Prevention Education Program. Call 476-5222.

CPR Training

"Save A Heart" Program. CPR classes sponsored by UCSF CPR Center. Rm. 229, Nursing Bldg., enter through 521 Parnassus. Classes are from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. or 6-10 p.m. $20. For schedule, information & registration call 476-1817.

CPR Road Show. Traveling CPR instruction by volunteer instructors sponsored by the UCSF Center for Prehospital Research & Training. Call 476-8502.

Volunteer Orientation

Program to acquaint new & prospective volunteers with opportunities available in the Medical Center at UCSF. Held in Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute Auditorium, 401 Parnassus. For further information call 476-1196.

Tues., Aug. 25, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Cancer Hotline

The UCSF Cancer Referral Service enables cancer patients to place just one telephone call and learn the names of UCSF doctors specializing in the kind of treatment they need. Call 1-800-888-8664.

UCSF
University of California, San Francisco
News and Public Information Services
513 Parnassus Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94143-0462

She already had trouble seeing with her right eye. Now excess fluid in the left eye was threatening her with blindness.

The world challenges the very young.

Everything is so new. There's so much to learn. It's difficult enough just to make sense of everyday events.

The world confused Tabitha Burnell. She was born with glaucoma. Excess fluid had built up in her eyes, placing abnormal pressure on her optic nerves. The pressure threatened to damage the nerves and impair her sight.

A series of surgeries drained away the excess fluid. But the pressure already had damaged the optic nerve in Tabitha's right eye. The nerve transmitted scrambled signals to the brain.

To add to Tabitha's confusion, she was given up for adoption. She lived in three different foster homes by the time she was two.

At last she arrived at the Santa Rosa home of Mark and Marcia Burnell. The Burnells, who eventually adopted Tabitha, took in children others rejected. They have five adopted children and six foster children, in addition to their three biological children.

The Burnells knew Tabitha had eye problems. But they were unsure to what extent; she was too young to communicate. There were indications, however, that over time things were getting worse. "She would go to sit on the couch, but she would sit down before she got to it," Marcia Burnell remembers. "She had no depth perception."

The probem finally became too serious to ignore. Tabitha's left eye—her good eye—was gradually turning cloudy. The pressure from the excess fluid had damaged a thin layer of tissue lining the surface of the cornea that faces the inside of the eyeball. That lining normally protects the cornea, the transparent cap covering the eyeball, from fluid inside the eye. But fluid had seeped in.

By the time she was five, Tabitha could no longer recognize faces. For her, the world was fading away. She became withdrawn and depressed—typical for young children who go blind.

The Burnells took Tabitha to see David Hwang, co-director of UCSF's Cornea Service. Hwang, who is among a handful of surgeons in California who perform cornea transplants in children, suggested that Tabitha would benefit from the delicate operation. The Burnells agreed.

The surgery requires the use of a microscope—and a steady hand. The cornea measures only half a millimeter thick and 11 millimeters in diameter. With a specially designed, round scalpel, Hwang cut out the central portion of Tabitha's cornea. He tacked down the donor cornea with 16 spoke-like sutures, using nylon thread half the thickness of human hair.

After the corneas grew together, Hwang removed the sutures in a series of operations spanning several weeks. Each time, Tabitha underwent general anesthesia.

Tabitha's body accepted the transplanted cornea. And now, almost two years later, Tabitha's restored sight means much more than being able to see. She no longer is withdrawn. She's talkative and she plays with other children. She also is learning to recognize numbers and letters in her special education class in kindergarten. Best of all, she can almost print her name.

Says Marcia Burnell, "I think the world is finally starting to make sense to her."

— Marshall Krantz

(For more information about corneal transplants, please call 476-3705.)

Tom Wachs

To Our Neighbors

July/August 1992

UCSF Forms New Attack on Breast Cancer

Public Invited to Wind Its Way Through DNA

Corneal Transplant Saves Seven-Year-Old's Eyesight

University of California, San Francisco
513 Parnassus Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94143-0462

More News for You

Enzyme "On-Off" Switch Controls Chemical Reactions

Seeking new ways to control chemical reactions, UCSF pharmaceutical chemist Charles Craik and biochemist colleague Robert J. Fletterick have genetically altered the common digestive enzyme trypsin and engineered a version of it with a built in "on-off" switch. The implications of their discovery could lead to everything from designer plants that clean up toxic metals to better laundry detergents.

The key to their work is the chemical switch, which was created by changing just one specific amino acid building block out of the hundreds that make up trypsin. The resulting enzyme has a metal-binding site that in the presence of copper, nickel or zinc, prevents it from doing what it normally does — slice protein bonds like those found in food. When the metals are not present, the altered trypsin returns to normal.

The success of the switch experiment provides a new way to learn even more about how enzymes spark chemical reactions. It also may lead to designing novel new enzymes with a wide variety of medical and industrial uses.

Demystifying the DNA Revolution

DNA, jumping genes, genetic engineering, splicing, coding, cloning. Like so many other words we often hear or read, they seem familiar or perhaps even a little sinister. But how many of us can really explain what the words mean? And how many appreciate or understand the varied ways the biotechnology revolution — and the industry it spawned — is changing our world?

On Friday and Saturday, September 25 and 26, at the Palace of Fine Arts Theater, some of the world's top scientists and DNA experts — including Nobel Prize winners Harold Varmus, James Watson, Paul Berg and Leon Lederman — will explain it all in a way everyone can understand in a public symposium entitled "Winding Your Way Through DNA." The symposium, presented by the UCSF School of Medicine with the San Francisco Exploratorium, will range from discussions of the early DNA discoveries and the technological insights that created new weapons against disease to the ethical implications of DNA technology in the doctor's office, the courtroom and on the farm.

Fee for the general public is $20. High school students who register in advance will be admitted free. For further information, call 476-6714.

Stress and Menstruation

Acute stress does not appear to disrupt the menstrual cycle, according to a new study by a research team from UCSF and the University of Toronto. In a study of 18 women, the researchers found that a simulated condition of acute stress did not alter the levels of three hormones that play a key role in cycle regulation.

Improved understanding of the role that stress does or does not have in cycle disruption will help to develop better treatment for women who experience this problem, says Robert Jaffe, the senior member of the research team and chair of the UCSF Department of Ob/Gyn & Reproductive Sciences.

Want to Learn More About UCSF's LRDP?

University representatives are available to make presentations regarding UCSF's Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) to any San Francisco block club or neighborhood organization. The campus wants maximum public involvement in the planning process, which will guide UCSF's growth over the next 15 years. Interested groups should call 476-3206.

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